
CAIRO - Egypt and Israel, enemies in 4 wars and uncomfortable neighbours for 13 years of frosty peace, have joined in a new partnership to seek a lasting settlement in the Middle East.

SARAJEVO - The top United Nations officer in embattled Sarajevo has warned of a "downward spiral" in the war and says the combatants stop at nothing, even bombarding their own people or masquerading as the Red Cross. A major military action broke out west of the besieged city early on Wednesday morning.

MOSCOW - Russian and Moldovan leaders have opened the way to a settlement of the conflict in Moldova, agreeing to a peace-keeping force and assuring rebel Slavs they will not be forced into union with Romania.

UNITED NATIONS - The Security Council adopted a resolution cutting off development aid to the Khmer Rouge guerrillas immediately if they continue to defy a U.N.-sponsored peace accord to restructure Cambodia.

PALERMO - Palermo’s rage and frustration at the Italian state’s impotence in the face of Mafia violence boiled over at the funeral of 5 police bodyguards, blown up in an attack on an anti-Mafia judge.

LES PERSPECTIVES D’EMPLOI DE L’OCDE

LE FIGARO: Le chômage touchera 30 millions de salariés


Insistant notamment sur l’importance d’une ‘réforme structurelle des marchés de travail’, l’OCDE avance quelques propositions autour de 2 grands axes: limite des politiques d’aides, ‘qui risquent d’engendrer une dépendance’ et ‘de fausser les comportements’ et multiplication des ‘actions propres à mobiliser les ressources en main-d’œuvre’... L’OCDE confirme la modification de la répartition des pertes d’emplois, soulignant que le secteur des services est plus durement touché, même dans des secteurs auparavant florissants comme la finance, la banque."

REUTER: Long haul for rich world to cut jobless ranks

PARIS - "... Tom Alexander, director of the OECD’s education, employment, labour and social affairs section, said unemployment was now at the top of the political agenda. But a solution to the kind of structural unemployment that exists in the developed world required more than faster growth and short-term political gestures, he told a news conference... ’Structural unemployment will certainly be in some ways attenuated by growth but it won’t go away’, he said. Restructuring the labour market, especially stepping up efforts to match workers to jobs with training if necessary, is more important than growth in the long term, Alexander said... One bright spot in the report is a growth in self-employment since 1979... This turnaround might partly reflect labour market rigidities but the OECD said governments should seek to nurture a revival in the entrepreneurial spirit by giving the self-employed better access to finance and training courses."
"... Le rapport de l’OCDE sur les perspectives de l’emploi révèle que, au cours des années 1980, le travail indépendant a progressé plus vite que l’ensemble de la population active civile occupée, du moins dans 12 des 20 pays où l’on dispose de statistiques. Et cela ‘contrairement à ce qui semblait être une tendance à long terme à la baisse jusque dans les années 1970’. En 1990, on dénombrait ainsi 37 millions de travailleurs indépendants dans l’OCDE... La progression la plus vive a été enregistrée en Belgique, en Irlande, en Italie, en Nouvelle-Zélande, au Portugal, et au Royaume-Uni. Outre-Manche, leur nombre a même presque doublé. C’est en Turquie, en Grèce, en Italie, au Portugal et en Espagne que l’on compte les chiffres les plus élevés (plus de 10%)."

FINANCIAL TIMES: Staying on at work seems an old fashion

LONDON - "Formal employment for men and women aged 55 or over is going out of fashion in the industrialised world, according to the OECD. Only 10.9% of Italian men of that age are in employment, 33% of British males, 28% of Frenchmen and 37% of American men, according to figures in the OECD’s latest Employment Outlook... That is one reason for the very high levels of what the OECD calls ‘non-employment’ - referring to people of working age who are either unemployed or not participating in the labour market - which now apply to 25% of men and 50% of women in the OECD countries. The OECD blames government social security rules, occupational pension schemes in the number of people covered by sickness and invalidity schemes for the drift away from the labour market by older workers. To avoid minimising conflict with employees and unions, says the OECD, companies have designed redundancy packages which allow people to retire at 53 or 54 with almost the same benefits as if they were to work to the age of 60. The OECD complains that this is throwing away valuable skills and, like many lobby groups for older people, calls for more flexible retirement ages."

Herald Tribune: OECD finds differences in Pacific

PARIS - "... New Zealand’s jobless level is expected to surge to 11.8% this year and 12% in 1993 from an average of 4.6% from 1981 to 1989. Australia, which averaged 7.7% unemployment in the 1980s, has a rate of 10.4%, which is expected to ease to 9.9% in 1993. New Zealand and Australia, under economic stress in the late 1980s because of difficulties facing their commodities exports, have been forced to abandon industrial protectionism and introduce changes in many cozy employment practices. The OECD notes New Zealand and Australia have been successful in curbing labor costs, setting the stage for a robust recovery this year. Japan, by contrast, faces a sharp slowdown in 1992, with only a modest recovery likely in 1993. But regardless of the ups-and-downs of its economy, unemployment is expected to remain remarkably stable at just over 2% of the work force."

MEXIQUE

LES ECHOS: Le Mexique à la recherche d’investisseurs étrangers

"Entre la France et le Mexique, ‘il y a une volonté partagée d’aller plus loin’, expliquent les experts en soulignant que les relations économiques sont entrées dans une phase de réchauffement. Carlos Salinas de Gortari, le président du mexique, est à Paris pour une visite officielle de 24 heures au cours de laquelle il doit rencontrer François Mitterrand et Pierre Bérégovoy. A deux reprises, il s’entretiendra avec la communauté d’affaires française, dont le CNPF, qui a effectué, en décembre dernier, une mission de prospection à Mexico... Salinas de Gortari vient plaider en faveur d’un flux accru de capitaux étrangers vers son pays. Alors que le texte d’un accord d’encouragement et de protection mutuelle des investissements est en cours de discussion entre les 2 pays, la France occupe le 6ème rang en tant qu’investisseur étranger au Mexique... Le président mexicain va mettre à profit son passage à Paris pour s’entretenir avec le Secrétaire Général de l’OCDE, Jean-Claude Paye. Membre du GATT depuis 1986, le Mexique souhaite s’intégrer davantage au monde industrialisé et entend, dans cette optique, passer du statut d’observateur au sein de l’OCDE, à celui d’adhérent à part entière."

REUTER: Mexico caves in on key areas of free trade deal

WASHINGTON - "Eager to clinch a free trade deal with the United States and Canada soon, trade sources say Mexico is making big concessions on the opening of markets for everything from computers to corn for tortillas."
Mexico has said repeatedly that it expects the North American Free Trade Agreement to be signed before the November 3 U.S. presidential election. Since Congress must be given 90 days to review the pact before President George Bush can sign it, the agreement must be struck during a ministerial meeting which begins on Saturday in Mexico. Trade sources said Mexico has been yielding ground on key areas such as corn, banking, computing and advertising, as well as the politically sensitive energy sector.

WORLD’S BIGGEST AIRLINE ALLIANCE

THE TIMES: British Airways takes $750m stake in USAir

"British Airways is to buy a 44% stake in USAir Group, the American internal carrier, for $750 million, creating the world’s biggest airline alliance. With more than 78 million passengers a year, the BA partnership will outrank American Airlines and Delta, currently the world’s two biggest carriers. The deal will also give BA its long-sought American domestic partner."

NUCLEAR ENERGY

REUTER: Russia, Japan, US and EC sign nuclear fusion deal

WASHINGTON - "The United States on Tuesday signed a 6-year $1.2bn agreement with Russia, Japan and the European Community to jointly design an experimental nuclear fusion reactor which could be operating by 2005. EC ambassador Andreas van Agt said the 4-party cooperation on the experimental fusion reactor was unprecendented in size and scope and could be a model for other large research projets."

UNITED STATES

HERALD TRIBUNE: Rebound will soon gain steam, the Fed says

NEW YORK - "Alan Greenspan on Tuesday offered Congress a mildly upbeat forecast from the Federal Reserve, saying that the US economy would soon pick up speed. But the Federal Reserve Board chairman was immediately forced on the defensive by skeptical Democrats who interrupted and contradicted him in their eagerness to write a do-nothing election-year record for the Bush administration and the central bank. Presenting his semiannual economic report to the Senate Banking Committee, Mr. Greenspan said the Fed’s consensus forecast for real economic growth this year averaged about 2.5% and for next year just about 3%, only slightly better than his last forecast for 1992, delivered in February, of about 2%... The chairman further defended the Fed by citing its record of 23 steps to bring interest rates down to the lowest levels in almost 30 years."